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ABSTRACT

Recommendations of six state reports that addressed issues confronting state governments and public higher education in the last 2 decades, as well as some new issues, are considered using content analysis. The reports were prepared by formal study commissions in the following states: Arkansas, Colorado, Maine, Michigan, Nebraska, and New York. In addition to briefly reviewing related literature, the recommendations are categorized, and new trends in the relationship between the state and higher education are identified. The potential impact of the recommendations on flagship universities are also assessed. The 301 recommendations are grouped into 18 categories, of which those most represented in the reports are: program review, finances, governance, size and scope, and economic development. For each of the 18 categories, tables indicate the frequency of the recommendations found in the six reports, and the distribution of the categories by state. The following conclusions are offered: many of the issues affecting statewide governance have persisted over time; new issues are found; both increased centralization and decentralization are recommended; flagship universities are likely to benefit from recommendations aimed at differentiation; and governors are becoming more active in higher education issues. Four pages of references are included. (SW)

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This paper was presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education held at the Gunter Hotel in San Antonio, Texas, February 20-23, 1986. This paper was reviewed by ASHE and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with the research of higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC collection of ASHE conference papers.

Introduction

In a recent essay, Marvin W. Peterson reviewed various aspects of the higher education environment. Regarding the political environment at the state level, he wrote that the "direction of state government control is not clear and is in a state of ferment" (37, p.15). The conditions of uncertainty and unrest to which Peterson refers have led many political leaders to believe that a reexamination of education at all levels is in order. Consequently, numerous studies, task forces, and commissions have been established and called into action. One observer has noted that more than 200 such groups have been created by state and local political leaders since 1982 (36). Indeed, education in general and higher education in particular are under study.

Less than a year ago, at the Wingspread Conference on Governors and Higher Education, Aims C. McGuinness of the Education Commission of the States reported that nearly a dozen states were considering changes in their higher education coordinating or governing structures (28). However, in a number of those states much more than structural changes were being considered. In fact, formal study commissions with comprehensive mandates were formed in at least six states: Arkansas, Colorado, Maine, Michigan, Nebraska, and New York.

Authorization for the commissions varied. In some states governors created them; in others they were formed by legislative action. New York's study team was convened by the Chancellor of the State University of New York. Regardless of their different points of origin, these six commissions share remarkably similar purposes. Each of them was asked to examine the status of public higher education and to issue a report stating their findings and their recommendations.

The analysis presented in this paper focuses on the recommendations contained in the reports of committees working in the six states mentioned above. Three objectives guided this investigation. The primary objective was to identify the types of recommendations being proposed and to arrange them into an analytical framework. The second objective was to determine whether the recommendations suggest any new trends in the relationship between the state and higher education. A final objective was to examine the recommendations in light of their potential impact on flagship universities.

This paper is organized into five sections: related literature, research methods, report summaries, findings, and conclusions.

Related Literature

For nearly forty years now, scholars and researchers have been examining a variety of issues concerning the relationship of state governments and public higher education and have produced an extensive body of literature in a relatively brief period of time. This review is intended to highlight some of the major works and popular themes of that literature. For a more detailed and comprehensive review of the relevant literature see D. Kent Halstead (23) and John D. Millett (30).

Among the early efforts to investigate statewide governance of higher education are two studies, both of which appeared in 1959: Lyman Glenny's Autonomy of Public Colleges (21) and Moos and Rourke's The Campus and the State (32), the latter being the full staff report of a national committee that issued a separate report under the title The Efficiency of Freedom (15). These works arrive at much different conclusions. Glenny analyzed existing forms of statewide coordination in twelve states and concluded that similar governance patterns were needed in other states in order to prepare for the growth and expansion of the coming decade. The Moos and Rourke study, as well as its companion piece, was concerned with the impact of state administrative controls and cautioned that too much centralization of authority would reduce institutional initiative and constrain institutional leadership.

In the 1960s, a number of studies dealt with different features of statewide governance of higher education. For example, Chambers (14) compared voluntary and mandatory forms of coordination; Brumbaugh (9) analyzed the planning activities of fifteen states; and Williams (40) examined the legal foundations of boards in thirty-nine states. Two of the more comprehensive studies of the 1960s were done by Martorana and Hollis (26) and by McConnell (27), both of whom used a national sample of all fifty states and compared governance arrangements.

Two significant works of the 1970s were Berdahl's Statewide Coordination of Higher Education (5) and Halstead's Statewide Planning in Higher Education (23). It was also during the early seventies that foundations and commissions sponsored several studies. The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education examined governance issues in two studies, and the Education Commission of the States published a major report on the subject as well (10,11,16). In 1976, another Carnegie report, The States and Higher Education, appeared (12). It concluded that consolidated boards were the most effective means of achieving statewide planning while maintaining institutional autonomy.

The research of the late seventies and on into the 1980s was more issue-oriented than earlier periods. Several analyses of program review practices appeared (2,3,4,22). Also,

budget and related financial issues became popular topics (6,38). Mingle, Berdahl, and Peterson compared reorganization efforts that involved closures and mergers (31). Finally, numerous studies and essays examined the concepts of power, authority, and conflict as they pertained to statewide governance of higher education (19,27,29,30,33,34,35).

The impact of coordinating or governing structures on flagship institutions has been a concern of a few recent contributions. Floyd discussed how a state board prevented a flagship university from acquiring additional campuses (18). Bonham and Millett commented on the "leveling" phenomenon (7,30). Finally, a comparative analysis of financial control practices imposed on Ph.D. granting universities was the focus of a recent study by Volkwein (39).

Research Methods

Content analysis was selected as an appropriate research methodology for this investigation because it is a method that is particularly well suited for studying and analyzing primary source documents. Two other reasons warrant its use. First, content analysis enables the investigator to make inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics of documents. Secondly, it is a technique that reveals similarities and differences as well as determines the relative emphasis and frequency of various phenomena.

As Kidder points out, there are several steps to conducting content analysis (25). The first step involves choosing the phenomenon to be coded. In this paper, for example, the recommendations contained in the selected reports constitute the phenomena to be coded.

The next step is selecting the data source from which observations will be made. A major concern regarding this aspect of content analysis is the extent to which the data sources can be judged typical or representative. In this investigation, very general selection criteria were employed. The reports that were used as data sources were selected on the basis of their recency (published since 1984) and their availability. Fortunately, the six reports analyzed in this paper cover three different regions in the United States - the Northeast (two reports), the Midwest (two reports) and the West (two reports). Nonetheless, the general nature of these selection criteria must be considered to be a limitation of this study. One's ability to generalize from the findings is constrained.

A third step in conducting content analysis is deriving the coding categories. Before beginning to analyze documents, the investigator must determine what kind of coding procedure will be used. For example, a binary procedure could be selected, one where the data are categorized according to the

presence or absence of a predetermined variable. Another approach is to use a multicategory procedure in which categories are derived because they are mutually exclusive. The multicategory approach was used in this study.

Another consideration is deciding on a sampling strategy. Here again, the researcher must make a choice before beginning to code the data. Will every reference to the phenomenon under observation be used or will every other reference be included? Here the author chose to include all recommendations as the sample. In other words, all statements labeled "recommendation" in the reports were considered (N = 301).

A final step in using the content analysis technique is to determine how the data will be represented. A straightforward method is to show the data in summary form, as numbers and percentages. The results of the data analyzed in this investigation are so presented. In addition to presenting a summary of the data by indicating what categories were derived and in what number, the data are also presented using a conceptual framework from organization theory. In so doing, the results can be viewed from an abstract perspective as well.

Report Summaries

ARKANSAS: Quality Development in Higher Education to Meet the Future Needs of Arkansas
Report of the Quality Higher Education Study Committee, October 1984.

The Quality Higher Education Study Committee was formed by legislation that was passed in the Arkansas General Assembly in 1983. The Committee consisted of seventeen members, including a gubernatorially-appointed Chairman, the Director of the Department of Higher Education, who served as secretary, and fifteen other members appointed by the State Board of Higher Education. The membership was representative of higher education faculty and administration, secondary school faculty and administration, parents of college and university students, and the general public.

The Committee was given a fairly broad mandate and was charged with preparing a thoroughgoing study of the overall quality of education being offered at public higher education institutions. The committee members were also asked to make appropriate recommendations. The study involved meetings with leaders from education and industry and twenty public hearings held throughout the state.

The final report was presented to the Joint Interim Committee on Education of the Arkansas General Assembly on October 1, 1984. It contained forty-three recommendations which were intended to address six general observations;

1) The state of Arkansas has limited financial resources.

2) The state of Arkansas has a cycle of low educational attainment and low income levels among its citizens.

3) Higher education institutions need more management and administrative flexibility.

4) There is a need to collect and disseminate information about higher education in the state.

5) There is a distinct need for greater emphasis on students - both prospective and those already enrolled.

6) Recommendations should be implemented with limited legislation.

COLORADO: Report to the Colorado General Assembly: Higher Education. Report of the Higher Education Committee established pursuant to H.B. 1360, 1984.

As in Arkansas, the Colorado report was created by legislation. The legislation specified that the Chairman of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education chair the committee and that the additional membership include: three persons appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, three persons appointed by the President of the Senate, and two persons appointed by the Governor. The Bill also provided for staff assistance by the Legislative Council.

The Higher Education Committee was asked to assess higher education in Colorado and make recommendations in six broad areas. They are:

1. increasing efficiency, accountability, quality, diversity, and availability of publicly supported higher education, within the limits of current state resources;

2. the most effective means of organizing the governance of higher education;

3. any changes in the role and mission of each governing board;

4. the utilization of the system

5. any changes in the role and mission of each institution;

6. final responsibility for coordination among governing boards, including, but not limited to, academic program initiation and closure, operating and capital budget requests, admission and graduate studies approval, and personnel decisions.

In discharging their responsibility, the Committee met twenty-one times and received testimony from a variety of groups, including board members, institutional leaders, interested faculty, students, citizens, community leaders, and legislators.

On the basis of the testimony, the Committee reached the unanimous conclusion that "the General Assembly must act decisively in 1985 to correct serious organizational, management, and financing weaknesses in Colorado higher education" (p.3). More specifically, the findings of the report reveal that Colorado's system is overbuilt for the current demand; that the state does not have a statewide policy board with implementation authority for higher education - consequently the roles and missions of institutions have expanded, and seven campuses now claim university status; that the funding base for higher education has declined to a level that threatens quality; and that individual governing boards seem unable to cooperate for the betterment of the state.

The full report contains forty-five separate recommendations. Sixteen of them are directed to the General Assembly and are organized into three categories: governance, role and mission, and financing. Nearly twice as many (N=29) were aimed at the statewide governing board, and those were organized to address five policy areas: quality, access, diversity, efficiency, and accountability.

MAINE: Report of the Visiting Committee to the University of Maine, January 1986.

The Visiting Committee, although formed by Maine's Governor, Joseph E. Brennan, in an executive order signed on August 17, 1984, was created by earlier legislation. The enabling act stipulated that funds be set aside to establish an eleven member committee appointed by the Governor; five members were to be Maine residents unaffiliated with the university and six were to be from among national educators and business leaders.

The Committee was asked to make a comprehensive review of the University System, its overall mission, its principal activities, governance, institutional missions, and the allocation of financial resources. The Committee was further charged to address nine policy issues: access and quality; research and development; remedial education; public and community services; teacher training; Maine's Vocational Technical Institutes, the Maine Maritime Academy, and Maine's private

colleges; financial aid; electronic classrooms; and philanthropic support. To conduct its work, the Committee was given $75,000 in appropriated funds and was asked to deliver its findings and recommendations in a report.

The final report was issued in January, 1986. After stipulating five goals - excellence, diversity, accessibility, governance and leadership, and adequate financial support - the report presented twenty findings and twenty recommendations. The recommendations fell under four headings: the structure of the university system, the academic programs, governance and leadership, and financial support.

MICHIGAN: Putting Our Minds Together: New Directions for Michigan Higher Education. The Governor's Commission on the Future of Higher Education in Michigan, December 31, 1984.

Like the Maine report, the Michigan report is the result of an executive order. In the ubiquitous "whereas" section of the order, Governor James T. Blanchard outlined the contextual factors which gave rise to the study. He cited accelerated economic change, limited financial resources, the recognition that higher education is vital to the state's future, and the need for resolution of institutional missions as warranting his issuing the order.

Seven "duties and responsibilities" were given to the Commission. Essentially, the Commission was asked to seek

advice from all sectors of the higher education community and to make recommendations regarding future needs, areas of research that should receive priority support, and the role of the institutions in stimulating economic development.

The Commission consisted of twenty-five appointees, all of them leaders in their respective professions. There were attorneys, a newspaper editor, industry presidents, board chairmen, and a university President Emeritus, to name a few who served. In addition, the Commission was staffed by ten people and two consultants. The W. K. Kellogg Foundation helped to finance the Commission's work and made possible a statewide survey of Michigan adults; the results are published in "Attitudes and Opinions: Michigan Higher Education." The Commission also benefited from twenty-four other background papers.

Twenty-two major recommendations are contained in the report, and many of them include sub-recommendations as well. They are loosely arranged under four broad headings: 1) Investing in People, 2) Focusing Priorities, 3) Supporting Economic Progress, and 4) Creating a Partnership for Action.

NEBRASKA: Toward the 21st Century. Report of the Citizens' Commission for the Study of Higher Education in Nebraska, December 1984.

The Nebraska Report lacks the official enabling action of the previous reports. It was not born of legislation nor

of executive order. However, its genesis comes closer to the latter than the former.

In July of 1984, Governor Robert Kerry convened the Citizens' Commission for Higher Education. He appointed sixty-six citizens to the Commission; seven adjunct members were appointed from the State Senate; and a staff of five was assembled. Dr. James C. Olson, President-Emeritus of the University of Missouri was director of the project.

The Commission, which followed the Governor's Task Force on Excellence in (secondary) Education, was asked to provide an assessment of Nebraska's future need for higher education and of the future role of higher education in the state's economy. It did so by holding six meetings of the full Commission throughout the state, by attending a day-long conference on higher education, and by holding subcommittee meetings. The general public was permitted to make comments at all but the last two Commission meetings. The director of the study traveled to nearly all postsecondary institutions to interview chief executives. The Committee was also aided by material contained in five background papers. Financial support for the study was provided by five foundations.

The Nebraska Study concluded that Nebraska's colleges and universities "must work together to promote excellence

without extravagance" (p.x). Thus, the Commission established nine goals fcr higher education in Nebraska:

1) To provide, as part of general instruction and learning, a strong emphasis on high quality liberal arts education.

2) To assure, at all levels, the highest possible quality of education.

3) To assure that high quality vocational training is broadly accessible and reflects local and regional economic needs.

4) To place new emphasis on research which contributes to the development and diversification of Nebraska's economy in this era of technological change while continuing to maintain high quality programs of both basic and applied research.

5) To maintain, through outreach and extension, a system of technology transfer and a program for improvement in the quality of life.

6) To further develop the state's postsecondary institutions as cultural centers for all citizens.

7) To utilize to the fullest the state's comprehensive system of educational telecommunication.

8) To establish a network of communication, coordination, and cooperation among the various postsecondary institutions so as to permit greater effectiveness of programs and better utilization of resources.

9) To provide increased educational and employment opportunities for minorities and women (p.x).

The Commission made thirty recommendations which were organized into five policy areas: access, quality, efficiencies, economy, and governance.

NEW YORK: The Challenge and the Choice, the State University of New York. Report of the Independent Commission on the Future of the State University of New York, January 16, 1985.

The SUNY Report is dramatically different from the other five efforts in at least one important way. It is not a legislatively enacted nor a gubernatorially initiated project. Instead, the Commission was created by SUNY's Chancellor, Clifton R. Wharton, Jr., and, by extension, the SUNY Board. The purpose of the Commission was "to encourage citizen participation in deliberations concerning the future course for SUNY in an era of 'constrained resources' and 'increasingly restricted regulatory environment'"(p.9).

The Commission consisted of fifteen leaders in the fields of government, business, labor, and education. Ralph P. Davidson, Chairman of the Board, Time Inc., and Harold Enarson, President Emeritus, The Ohio State University, were the Commission's co-chairmen. Five members of the Commission had experience as university presidents in other states. Assisting the Commission was a staff of seven and three principal consultants. As was the case in some of the other states, several foundations provided financial support.

The Commission received input by conducting approximately 190 interviews, including those with officials in the executive and legislative branches of government, by holding public hearings in New York City and Albany; by reviewing

more than 50 staff studies; and by visiting 18 SUNY campuses. On the basis of the information they analyzed, of their own years of experience in management roles, and of the extensive discussions with each other, the Commissioners issued a report intended to guide policy formation.

The report concludes that, in the areas of research and graduate education, SUNY's achievement lags behind other leading public universities, and that SUNY is the most over-regulated university in the nation. To address those conclusions, the report offers 29 recommendations. They are listed under four major headings: Strengthening SUNY's Contribution to the State, Management Flexibility, SUNY's Configuration, and Finance.

Findings

The general findings of this investigation are contained in Tables 1, 2, and 3. Table 1 lists the categories of recommendations that were identified and provides a frequency distribution. Table 2 also lists the recommendations categories but presents them in a different order. Here they are arranged by frequency of appearance in the six statewide reports that were studied. Finally, Table 3 shows the results of refining the eighteen recommendation categories into six broader groupings reflecting organizational characteristics.

As Table 1 indicates, a total of 301 recommendations yielded 18 different categories. Those categories with more than twenty separate recommendations include the following: program review (N=30), finances (N=26), governance (N=25), size and scope (N=24), and economic development (N=22).

Due to time and space considerations, this discussion will not attempt to analyze the substance of all 18 categories. Instead, a few of the major categories will be elaborated, and the remainder will be briefly summarized.

In general, the recommendations related to program review call for more, not less, activity in this area. Two examples illustrate the increased interest in and sustained reliance on program review. The Nebraska and Colorado reports both focus on reporting the results of program review. In Nebraska, a mechanism for implementing the results of program review is advised. The Colorado report suggests that the "statewide governing board should annually report on the results of its reviews and actions in connection with the presently established procedures for annual institutional program review" (p.15).

Two themes are evident concerning the recommendations on financing: incentives and flexibility. Typical of the recommendations dealing with incentives is the following from the Colorado Report:

TABLE 1

Identification and Frequency of Recommendations
Found in Six State-level Reports on Public Higher Education

	Category	N	%
1.	Program Review	30	10
2.	Finances	26	9
3.	Governance	25	8
4.	Size and Scope	24	8
5.	Faculty Evaluation	23	8
6.	Economic Development	22	7
7.	Teacher Education	17	6
8.	Quality Initiatives	16	5
9.	Student Costs	16	5
10.	Affirmative Action	14	5
11.	Faculty Development	14	5
12.	Cooperation with Other Colleges and Universities	13	4
13.	Facilities	13	4
14.	Role and Mission	12	4
15.	Non-instructional Activities	11	4
16.	Student Assessment	11	4
17.	Cooperation with Other Organizations	10	3
18.	Faculty Salaries	4	1
	TOTAL	301	100

> An enrichment funding mechanism should be established to permit special project funding for exemplary programs, collaborative projects, experimentation, innovations, and other initiatives which identifiably contribute to quality, access, diversity, and efficiency in the higher education system (p.13).

Several recommendations spoke to the issue of fiscal management flexibility. An example from the New York Report goes the furthest in this regard:

> The state share of operating support for SUNY should be provided in a lump sum, by which is meant that the trustees should have discretion as to the allocation of these funds, as well as discretion to shift funds among budget categories. Upon the recommendation of the Chancellor, SUNY's trustees should, in turn, provide lump-sum funding to the campuses, by which it is meant that each campus should retain the ability to shift funds within a level of total funding and to expend those funds in accordance with policies of the trustees (p.49).

Two reports suggested different solutions to similar problems. The New York and Michigan reports state opposing views regarding the role of enrollment in budget formation. According to the Michigan report, enrollment should be a "key factor in the distribution of state subsidies"; while the New York report notes that "neither increases nor declines in enrollment should be used as the sole or primary basis for budgetary assessments of the needs and funding of public higher education."

The reports paid considerable attention to governance issues, and a few major changes were considered. The committee

members in Arkansas rejected the notion of a single governing board; however, in Colorado, they recommended the establishment of a single statewide governing board as well as institutional boards; and in Nebraska they recommended that its four state colleges should be transferred to the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska. The New York Committee advised that legislation should be adopted to make the SUNY Board a public benefit corporation.

Another major theme related to governance was the call for greater institutional management flexibility. Several recommendations in the New York report sought to counter what the Committee called "overregulation". The Arkansas report contained a recommendation calling for a clear policy statement of the division between decisions which should be made at the institution level and those in which a central authority should be involved. Similarly, the Maine report suggests that the Board of Trustees delineate clearly the different responsibilities of the Chancellor and the University presidents.

Related to governance, the categories of size and scope and role and mission together accounted for 36 recommendations. Differentiation was a common theme among them. This theme dominated the Maine report in which a recommendation for institutional name changes was offered as one way to clarify missions among institutions.

Finally, economic development was an area that figured prominently in four of the reports. In fact, many of the recommendations that called for additional funding did so on the basis of recognizing a close link between the healtn of the states' economy and the universities. This was certainly the case in the Michigan report where several economic development strategies are recommended. Many of them were designed to support research efforts, including a state matching fund for endowed faculty positions, state supported graduate fellowships, state matching funds for indirect cost revenues, and appropriations for major research equipment.

To summarize the remaining categories of recommendations:

1. There should be statewide policies for faculty performance reviews.
2. Admissions standards should be improved.
3. More improvements are needed in the area of teacher education.
4. More efforts should be directed to recruiting minorities.
5. More faculty development options should be available.
6. Student Assessments practices should be improved.
7. More cooperation should be fostered with other organizations in the state and with other higher education institutions in the state.
8. Student costs should not increase substantially.
9. Non-instructional activity should operate more efficiently and, where possible, on a cost-recovery basis.
10. Faculty salaries should be upgraded.

Table 2 provides a distribution of the categories on the basis of their frequency of appearance in the six reports. The Table can be summarized as follows:

1. Three recommendation categories appeared in all six reports - program review, finances, and quality initiatives.

2. Six recommendation categories appeared in five reports - governance, size and scope, teacher education, student costs, facilities, and cooperation with other organizations.

3. Five recommendation categories appeared in four reports - economic development, affirmative action, faculty development, cooperation with other colleges and universities, role and mission.

4. One recommendation category appeared in three reports - faculty evaluation.

5. Three recommendation categories appeared in two reports - non-instructional activities, student assessment, and faculty salaries.

In order to view these findings more conceptually, a framework based loosely on Galbraith's work (20) is used. The framework attempts to represent the factors that must be considered in the design of an organization and has been applied previously to a higher education setting (1). Galbraith identifies six organizational elements: goals, activities, structure, people, decision processes, and resources.

Goals refer to the outcome the organization seeks to achieve; activities are tasks intended to produce the outcomes sought; structure refers to those issues involving the formal

TABLE 2

Distribution of Categories by Appearance in Statewide Reports on Public Higher Education

	Category	AK	CO	ME	MI	NE	NY
1.	Program Review	X	X	X	X	X	X
2.	Finances	X	X	X	X	X	X
3.	Quality Initiatives	X	X	X	X	X	X
4.	Governance	X	X	X		X	X
5.	Size and Scope	X	X	X		X	X
6.	Teacher Education	X	X	X	X	X	
7.	Student Costs	X	X	X	X	X	
8.	Facilities	X	X	X	X	X	
9.	Cooperation with Other Organizations	X	X		X	X	X
10.	Economic Development	X			X	X	X
11.	Affirmative Action	X	X		X		X
12.	Faculty Development	X		X	X	X	
13.	Cooperation with Other Colleges & Universities	X	X			X	X
14.	Role and Mission		X	X	X		X
15.	Faculty Evaluation	X	X			X	
16.	Non-instructional Activities	X		X			
17.	Student Assessment	X	X				
18.	Faculty Salaries	X				X	

organization, such as the division of labor, size of components, etc.; people are the various aspects of human behavior, including individuals as well as groups; decision processes are procedures that have been established - both formal and informal - that play a role in planning, controlling, and communicating; resources imply the physical as well as fiscal needs of the organization.

Table 3 shows the distribution of the recommendations using the conceptual framework described above. The following outline shows the relationship between the six categories in Table 3 and the eighteen categories previously discussed.

I.	GOALS:	Affirmative Actions Quality Initiatives
II.	ACTIVITIES:	Economic Development Program Review Non-instructional Activities Teacher Education
III.	STRUCTURE:	Size and Scope Role and Mission
IV.	PEOPLE:	Faculty Evaluation Faculty Development Faculty Salaries Student Costs Student Assessments Cooperation with Other Organizations Cooperation with Colleges and Universities
V.	DECISION PROCESSES:	Governance
VI.	RESOURCES:	Facilities Finances

TABLE 3

An Organizational Representation of the
Recommendations Found in Six State-level Reports
on Public Higher Education

Characteristics	N	%
1. People	92	30
2. Activities	80	26
3. Resources	39	13
4. Structure	35	12
5. Goals	30	10
6. Decision Processes	25	8
TOTAL	301	99*

*Due to Rounding

Presenting the data in such a way shows that over half of the recommendations concern people and activities. Resources, structure, goals, and decision processes follow in numerical value.

Conclusions

Based on the pattern of recommendations found in the six reports, the following conclusions can be made.

1. Many of the issues affecting statewide governance of higher education have persisted over time.
2. The reports include a number of new issues.
3. The recommendations call for both increased centralization and greater decentralization.
4. Flagship universities are likely to benefit from the recommendations aimed at differentiation.
5. Governors are becoming more active in higher education issues.

Each of these conclusions is discussed in the following section.

1. Many of the issues affecting statewide governance of higher education have persisted over time.

Some of the recommendations contained in the six reports reflect political and educational issues that have been and continue to be challenging and perplexing. One such issue is the perceived need to address program duplication on a statewide basis. States have struggled with different strategies designed to limit program duplication and have turned frequently to academic program review processes as a solution.

Therefore, it is not surprising to find that program review recommendations appeared in every report. Designing optimal program review processes and using the results of program review in decision making still pose difficulties for institutions and for statewide coordinating agencies.

Another recurring issue is how to provide adequate financial support to all the state's colleges and universities in a slow-growth or a no-growth economy. Coupled to this issue in some states is the perception that public higher education is overextended. One hears with increasing frequency that in order to achieve more efficiency and to improve effectiveness, greater differentiation among institutions is needed. Moreover, resource allocation should be partially tied to such a plan for differentiation. This press for greater differentiation of missions and activities appears to be a motivating force behind some of the recommendations in the categories labeled finances, governance, size and scope, and role and mission.

The reports, by dealing with issues that have previously affected the relationship between state government and public higher education, demonstrate once again the complexities of that relationship. It does appear as if certain "standing antagonisms," to borrow a phrase from John Stuart Mill, are ever present.

2. The reports include a number of new issues.

The most prevalent and important new issue discussed is economic development. Economic development itself is not new, but the way in which it is joining state government and higher education is new and is noteworthy. The economic development recommendations reflect a renewed recognition by the executive and the legislative branches of state government that higher education is vitally linked to a state's economic strength.

Unlike most other recommendations, the economic development proposals account for a substantial portion of the new revenue that would become available if the recommendations are enacted. States are looking at the prospect of supporting an array of new initiatives, including the following: matching funds for research revenue and for endowed professorships, grant competitions for research projects, job training programs, and technology transfer ventures.

The economic development issue is moving forward in a number of states, conveying great expectations and a sense of urgency. Frequently, however, the rhetoric runs ahead of the reality. A recent article in the Chronicle of Higher Education includes statements by some observers who seriously question if economic development activities can deliver on what has been promised (24). Nonetheless, the process by which the economic development activities have been developed has engendered a new spirit of cooperation among universities, industry, and government.

A second new trend evident throughout the reports is a desire for improving quality. The reports offer a set of policies that are aimed at improving the quality of the curriculum, admissions criteria, teacher education, research, and public service. A recent study has focused exclusively on the states initiatives for improving the undergraduate curriculum (8).

Some of the quality improvement recommendations also seek to improve leadership. They imply that the two are related and suggest that in order to improve the quality of higher education, administrative leadership should be strengthened as well.

3. <u>The recommendations call for both increased centralization and greater decentralization</u>.

As is often noted in the organizational theory literature, the relationship between an organization and its environment is essentially one of exchange. This appears to be true regarding higher education and its political environment, as elements of exchange theory seem to be operating regarding the recommendations that call for more centralization and decentralization.

The increase in centralization comes largely from the economic development and the quality improvement recommendations. As new activities, these initiatives are to be centrally directed and closely coordinated. Although not a new activity, program review is also a centrally-located function in many states.

At the same time, a number of recommendations are clearly intended to provide institutions with greater flexibility and reflect an interest in deregulation and decentralization. Many of the governance and financial recommendations provide for more institutional autonomy. For example, several recommendations underscore the importance of institutional boards. The Colorado report recommends establishing institutional boards where there currently are none and giving those boards specific, local powers. For a few of the reports the recommendations give institutional boards more authority and responsibility. Financial recommendations also show that more institutional discretion is needed. In Arkansas, Colorado, and New York, recommendations give institutions more financial responsibility and more flexibility with expenditures.

What might account for these seemingly contradictory recommendations? The ones which are more centrally-directed, such as economic development and quality initiatives, are new. Consequently, states may be more inclined to control them initially. A more plausible explanation, however, is the fact that these new initiatives also involve additional funding, and, in some cases, competitive processes are proposed as a means to obtain that funding. A competitive, peer review-type process, is of necessity centrally controlled.

The recommendations concerning decentralization come at a time when deregulation is receiving attention in a variety of sectors. A number of recently published reports such as the Carnegie Foundation's Control of the Campus, have urged statewide boards to give institutions more freedom and flexibility, particularly concerning financial matters (13). More important, however, the "deregulation" recommendations illustrate what McGuinness said in his essay on statewide reorganization, namely that "a growing awareness of the limitations of traditional state fiscal and regulatory controls and an interest in exploring new policy tools aimed at stimulating effective decentralized management and a creative "bottom-up" renewal within higher education" (28,p.75).

4. Flagship universities are likely to benefit from the recommendations aimed at differentiation.

As was previously noted, many of the recommendations in the reports that concern governance, finances, role and mission, and size and scope relate to the theme of differentiation. Essentially, they propose policies that would increase differentiation among institutions and programs. In a recent study, John D. Millett wrote:

> Presidents of flagship state universities within state systems seemed to believe that their institutions had been treated unfairly by governing boards and had been "leveled down" while newer institutions were "leveled up." In fairness, we must acknowledge that this complaint was widespread in all states regardless of organizational structure;

> there was some indication that this concern was being addressed in various ways in the different states as the 1980s unfold (30,p.111).

The leveling phenomenon to which Millett refers is evident in the Maine report where the Visiting Committee found that the academic quality of the University of Maine at Orono has declined since the establishment of the University System. The report offers a series of recommendations aimed at restoring quality to the University of Maine at Orono. Many of those recommendations pursue the theme of differentiation. For example, one proposal calls for renaming the University of Maine system to the State-University System of Maine and renaming the Orono campus to the University of Maine.

In Colorado and Michigan, recommendations for more carefully and explicitly defined institutional missions were offered. In some cases, it was further suggested that funding be partially based on those missions.

It would appear that the reports show great interest in the theme of differentiation, an obvious benefit to flagship institutions. The flagship universities are also likely to benefit from the economic development incentives that tend to favor research universities.

5. Governors are becoming increasingly active in higher education issues.

The reports provide further evidence that governors are

assuming a more active and more important role in the affairs of higher education. In several states, including Maine, New Jersey, and Nebraska, the governors have initiated studies of their state's higher education system. According to Clark Kerr, in most states the Governor has become the single most important person in higher education (17). In several of the reports considered in this analysis, the governors are exhorted to make careful appointments to governing boards and to avoid using the appointments as political favors. Not coincidentally, this renewed involvement on the part of governors comes at a time when federal support for higher education is declining.

Even at the national association level, the governors are dealing with higher education issues. Governor John Ashcroft of Missouri is leading a task force on college quality for the National Governors Association. Likewise, Governor Thomas H. Kean of New Jersey has convened a study group to examine state action to improve undergraduate education for the Education Commission of the States.

In summary, the six reports addressed many of the issues that have confronted state governments and higher education in the last two decades, and they considered a few new issues as well. The themes of centralization, decentralization, differentiation, and quality figured prominently in the reports. What future actions are taken in each state as a result of

these comprehensive reviews will define their true measure of success. In fact, in Colorado and New York some of the recommendations have already been implemented. No doubt, the reports will have achieved some measure of success if all they do is raise the awareness and aspiration levels of political leaders toward higher education.

In 1967, Governor Terry Sanford of North Carolina said that "more universities have suffered from political indifference than have been upset by political interference." Judging from the six reports analyzed in this paper, public colleges and universities will not be suffering from political indifference in the foreseeable future.

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